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ISLINGTON WELLS.



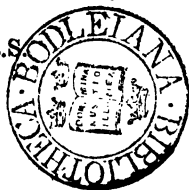
**AN OLD POEM ON
THE MINERAL WELLS**

**AT ISLINGTON, NEAR
LONDON,**

**DESCRIBING THE COMPANY WHO
RESORTED TO THEM.**

EDITED BY

J. O. HALLIWELL, ESQ., F.R.S.



**LONDON:
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PREFACE.

THE following poem, reprinted from a copy entitled, "Islington Wells, or the Threepenny-Academy,— London, Printed for E. Richardson, 1691," is, I believe, one of the earliest tracts yet discovered on the mineral wells at Islington, which were also known as the New Tunbridge Wells. Another poem on the subject appeared in 1699, under the title of, "A Walk to Islington, with a Description of the New Tunbridge, a Poem." Like all tracts of the seventeenth century referring to Is-

lington, both these pieces are extremely rare ; and the former appeared to be sufficiently curious to deserve a reprint. Another poem, called, “ *Æsop from Islington*,” 8vo. 1699, contains nothing of illustrative matter.

These springs were discovered by a person of the name of Sadler in the year 1683, and the spot is still known as Sadler’s Wells, a theatre now occupying the site. According to Cunningham, a pamphlet was published in 1684, giving an account of the discovery, with the virtues of the water, which is there said to be of a ferrugineous nature, and much resembling in quality and effects the water of Tunbridge Wells. The same author mentions a single half-sheet, called, “ *A Morning Ramble, or Islington Wells Burlesqt*,” London, Printed by George Croom, for the

Author, 1684." Another broadside is entitled, "An Exclamation from Tunbridge and Epsom against the new found Wells at Islington." There were, if I mistake not, two poems called, "A Walk to Islington," issued in 1699, one of which, a vulgar composition by Ned Ward, was more than once reprinted in the following century.





EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

O all pretty yong girls, by a late
sawcy pen,
Expos'd to an auction as matches
for men,
Who to Lincoln's-Inn-Walks, and the Park
make their Paces,
To shew their fine cloaths, but their much
finer faces,
And who frequently (cause they can do no-
thing else)
With their presence do honour fam'd Isling-
ton-Wells.
To all ladies whose portions are thousands
apiece,

From my Lord's youngest daughter to Alderman's Niece,
Who go thither as oft as occasion requires,
To cool their young bloods and inflame their desires.
To all sorts of wives (but most chiefly the young)
Who each morning in clusters to Islington throng,
And drink waters, as most men the story believe,
To render their bodies more apt to conceive ;
Tho both antient and modern agree in the matter,
That a chopping young heir was ne're got by thin water.
Opinion's the standard of all things below,
She proves but with child, let the father guess how ;
For however we banter an implicit faith,
We are bound to believe what our bedfellow saith.

All fine dressing beaus with their sparkish
 long wigs,
To all brisk lawyers clerks, and pert city
 young prigs,
Who having fine cloaths must go thither to
 show 'em,—
Is humbly presented

This following Poem.





ISLINGTON WELLS:

OR THE THREEPENNY-ACADEMY, ETC.

EV'RISH and hot by drinking
claret,
(And where's the mortal can for-
bear it)?

All pillow consultations scorning,
I left my bed by six i'th' morning ;
About which time dull sots are snoaring,
And sparks just rose from private whoring ;
But being drest, I found the curse,
Of a hot head, and cooling purse,
My guineas spent, my angels flown,
And nothing but a clipt half-crown,

(Which twinkling lay like snuff in socket)
To keep the Devil from my pocket :
Then think how could a scene of pleasure,
Be purchas'd with so small a treasure ?
Our inclinations may be sparkish,
When pocket at low-water-mark is ;
But having rack'd my Pia Mater,
For some cheap mirth by land or water,
At last could pitch on nothing else,
But Islington's renowned Wells,
Where twice or thrice a week most duly,
In months of May, June, August, July,
The doctor and his sly Jacall,
Whom some the pothecary call,
Lawyers, divines, civilians, quakers,
Some cuckolds, but more cuckold-makers,
Sharppers, decoys, trapans and bullies,
Designing cracks, and sneaking cullies,
Fine modish sparks, and dressing beaus,
Who charm the women with their cloaths ;
Ladies, some chaste, and others common,
Young, old, and many other women ;
The tradesman and his lovely spouse,

Th' enamour'd youth and's dear Queen
Blouze,

Taylor and other trades which rack
Invention to adorn the back,
Go there to make their observation,
Upon the dresses of the Nation,
Of either sex whole droves together,
To see and to be seen flock thither,
To drink, and not to drink the water,—
And here promiscuously they chatter.

'Twas seaven a clock when I came thither,
Serene the air and calm the weather,
Which prophesied a rendezvous,
Of Coquet Dames, and Sparkish beaus.
As yet no beauties fill'd the place,
No, not so much as Coat with lace;
But five old cits who walking, blundered,
And talked of thirty in the hundred,
What ships abroad were bound for home,
And that the Smyrna fleet was come;
How to put off their musty daughters,
To rich young heirs, and such like matters,
Which did to me as grateful prove,

As cats at midnight making love,
So quickly out of ear-shot getting,
As loathing their insipid prating,
Planted myself in arbour green,
So shaded that I scarce was seen :
So long I was not in that post sir,
As one might say his Pater-Noster ;
But in the arbor next to me,
I heard loud noise of Ha, Ha, He,
And louder yet the sound redoubles,
From the shrill throats of female trebles ;
I peep'd and did most plainly see,
Three ladies drest in dishabillee,
Who had, it seems, with other women,
Been at the labour of a seaman—
—s wife, who in the pains of child-birth,
Cry'd out, her fruit would be an ill-birth,
Unless her husband, first (to tell ye)
Had laid his hand upon her belly,
Which done, was brought to bed as well,
As full ripe philbert dropt from shell.
But Lord ! to hear their wild descants,
And most unheard, uncommon rants,

Would make one swear that Aristotle,
Would have improv'd to hear their tattle ;
Yet this we must not baudry call,
No, no, 'tis philosophical :
What they obscene in us condemn,
Is but meer natural talk with them.
But in the midst of all their laughing,
I fell unluckily a coughing,
Which put them into such a fright,
As if they'd seen a ghost or spright ;
Supposing there was no one near 'em,
Perceiving I did over hear 'em,
Clapt vizars on, and 'mongst the bushes,
Hid both their faces and their blushes.

By this time company repair,
As thick as to a wake or fair :
No broacher of a new religion,
Nor flat-noz'd quack, nor stage physitian,
Nor Indian King, unto his Palace,
Nor knots of Highway-men to th' gallows,
More followers have ever known,
Than come to Wells of Islington.

First came an old grave Governant,

C

With two young things, who call'd her aunt,
So pert, so innocent, and pretty,
Unpractiz'd in the tricks o'th' City :
In each of which so lovely creature,
Was seen pure unadulterate nature,
Before she learnt to love by rules,
And make them more accomplish'd fools.
Next came a beau bedawb'd with lace,
Conducting in with dam'd grimace,
A tawdry punk in fluttering cloaths,
Whom you must quality suppose ;
Then a young sempstress of th' Exchange,
In an undress so loose and strange,
That she was thought by every man,
To come from China or Japan.
Two sisters then so drest in strictness,
That one was but the other's likeness.
Next came three scarlet-coat Commanders,
Newly equipt to go for Flanders,
Who had to shew their active valours,
Two hours before well kickt their taylors,
For giving dun at chamber door,
For cloaths had of them years before ;

A Doctor then with twirling cane,
Well skill'd in each disease and pain,
Which do the corps of man assail,
From Crown of head to Great-Toe-nail,
And can of all the plants tell stories,
From Saffron down to stinking Orrice.
Next him a young spruce City fop,
Chief of a Linnen-drapers shop,
With a long-wig and tilter on,
To make him look like gentleman ;
And he might long for such have past,
If he had not himself disgrac'd,
To shew his mighty wit and skill in,
Bantring upon a ladies linnen,
Who quickly silenc'd the pert fop,
By telling him 'twas bought at's shop.
Then half a dozen of the fry,
Who can so neatly cogg a dye,
And all the tricks and customs know,
Of the High-fullhams and the low.
A brace of country squires next enter,
In chase of some unheard adventure,
Who thinking of themselves in Heaven,

Steal off with punks about eleven,
Who in few days the difference scan,
'Twixt country Joan, and city Nan.
Of women next an inundation,
All drest by strictest rules of fashion,
Who think by all their gay attire,
To set poor mortals hearts on fire;
But he deserves to have a bib on,
That's taken with the charms of ribbon,
Or walk into the whining road,
Out of respect to drest commode.
Of Gentlemen a num'rous store
With tickets, throng to reach the door,
Whose only business and whose trade is,
Each day to complement the ladies,
Which they in words so finely can dress,
They can't forbear it to their laundress;
For using vulgar words and phrases,
Their mouth most inf'nitely debases,
To say they've melancholly been,
Is barb'rous; no, they are chagrin;
To say a ladies looks are well,
Is common; no, her air is Belle.

If anything offends, the wig
Is tost, and they'r in such fatigue :
But now the evidence to sum up,
To such cheap pleasures most can come up,
And therefore 'twould be strange to rob,
Some topping gentry of the mob,
Of the Diversion ev'ry Munday,
To shew clean linnen worn on Sunday,
Especially if they're but civil,
(We must do Justice to the Devil)
For their ill-shap't unfashion'd cloaths,
May serve as foils to set off beaus ;
So Blacks by ladies standing seen,
Heighten the Whiteness of their skin.

And now like Modern sort of criticks,
By Antients call'd peripateticks,
Walkt sometimes hither, sometimes thither,
Conferring learned notes together ;
So here the ladies keep a pother,
In censuring of one another.
“ Lord ! Madam, did you e're behold,”
Says one, “ a dress so very old ?
Sure that commode was made, I'faith,

In days of Queen Elizabeth :
Or else it was esteem'd the fashion
At Charles the Second's coronation ;
The Lady by her Manteaus Forebody,
Sure takes a pride to dress like nobody ;"
When at the very self same time
She's taxt by others for the crime,
Of dressing of her head so high,
As if she would with steeples vye,
Or rival with her modish skill,
The Monument on Fish-Street Hill ;
Nor can the sparks themselves escape,
From censures on their mein and shape ;
For cloaths made fashionably well,
Not always can the fop conceal :
" Tho Nature made mans brest no windores
To publish what he does within doors,"
As saith immortal Hudibras,
Yet one may plainly see an ass,
Discern a fool, or view a prig in,
All his accomlisht modes of rigging.
The motions of the wandring stars,
So talkt of by Astrologers,

Cannot be more irregular,
Than were the Mortal motions here ;
Some to the Well advance their pace,
While others in a nameless place,
In privacy demurely scatter,
The kind effects of Mineral water.
Some to the Raffling-shop advance,
To see the strange effects of Chance,
And view the Sparks, with spotted-bones,
Lose both their wits and gold at once ;
Whilst others at the Royal-Oak,
With lift-up eyes good luck invoke.
Much pleasure sure must needs be had,
To see fulls, halves, and quarters laid.
To see a Town, not far from Dover,
Butter'd with Megs and Smelts all over ;
It needs must make their hearts all merry,
To hear the Ball speak Canterbury. .
Others who would cheap pleasures choose,
To coffee-house to read the news,
Retire, and there devoutly prate,
Of Luxemburgh and Catinat,
And talk as briskly of Commanders,

Who now are at their posts in Flanders,
As if in heats and colds and rains,
They'd past together some Campaigns,
When they had never crost the seas,
But in a Map with Compasses :
While others of Plebean fashion,
Who thither came for recreation,
In arbours closely shaded o're,
With climbing shrubs, and sycamore,
In mighty state themselves regale,
With fly-plumb-cakes, and windy ale.

Incognito I past along,
Through all the male, and female throng,
Saluted by the fragrancy
Of Powder de Orange,
Jesmine, Pulvil, and something else,
Us'd to correct some worse smells.
Till I arriv'd at rails which hem in
This famous Well, where two old women
Do kindly give the water gratis,—
(What nothing costs, at under-rate is)—
There cooling of their brains or blood,
A knot of Sparks, and ladies stood ;

Tho' 'tis believ'd upon the matter,
They better coolers knew than water.
Some doctors too, who gave advice,
(Most wonderful) without their fees,
Physitians being still of course,
Our bodies dearest confessors.
The two young ladies too were there,
With their old gouty overseer,
Who did more closely watch this couple,
Than dragon did the golden apple :
As in her hand with half pint glass,
The youngest of them drinking was,
A doctor comes with humble grin,
Bending his hams, and stroaking's chin,
And just against the Lady plac'd,
Demanded how her waters past :
She (blushing Innocence) asham'd
To hear so strange an action nam'd,
Away with more confusion fled,
Than if she'd seen the Gorgon's Head,
And 'tis believ'd will come no more ;
So am'rous sparks upon that score,
Have lost her beauties influence,

D

By one old fool's impertinence.

The musick plays, and 'tis such musick,
As quickly will make me or you sick ;
Nothing the ears so sorely wounds,
As ill scrap't notes and jarring sounds ;
But they to give the thing a grace,
Had got three trebles and a base,
With which (as apes are often seen,
To imitate the acts of men)
So vainly these pretend to play,
Some lessons in the Opera,
But still with much the same success,
As Quacks, do when they would express
Their skill in drugs, like learn'd physitian,
Or sign-post painters copying Titian.

'Twas now about the hour of ten
Precisely just the minute when
To Wells the hackney-coaches trot,
As fast as wasps to honey-pot.
One brings a couple newly married,
As yet in neithers love miscarried,
But Islington may prove to both,
Their matrimonial shibboleth.

For he perhaps in gazing round,
Has some new charming mistress found,
Whom he does 'fore his wife prefer,
So leaving spouse makes love to her,
While she alone in pensive pace,
Walking along so strange a place,
Is by some Spark of dress, and carriage,
Seduc'd from vows of Holy marriage,
Liking his modish soft caresses,
Above her husband's forc'd addresses,
And so contrives that very morning
A plot for poverty and horning.
Another Hackney-coach does rattle,
Crouded with Taudry female cattle,
Who thither come in hast to meet,
Some choice he-friend from Norfolk-street,
Thence highly to oblige their pockets,
To go and dine with them at Lockets.
Then in a coach as fine as may-be,
Comes old Sir Fumble and his Lady,
With the green sickness thing their daughter,
Who thither comes to drink the water,
Although 'tis plainly understood,

Something would do her much more good.
Then in guilt-coach with fine device
Comes in the spruce Sir Courtly Nice,
Who is with Ladies all men know
The very Pam at Lanktraloo ;
A pretty Chance to some may fall,
But he's the knave that picks up all.
To crown the mornings work at last,
Come in some men with seeming hast,
Conducting in with dam'd grimaces,
Six women with fine wainscot faces,
By which it was not hard to guess,
Th'were French men, and their mistresses,
Who in all places of resort,
Appear to make their publick court.
Our English breeding they condemn,
For we are clowns compar'd with them :
They walk before their ladies bare,
To shew their rev'rence for the fair,
Tho 'tis indecent some men have said,
All people love not smell of calves-head ;
Besides so very loud they prattle,
That petticoat subburbian cattle,

Half drunk at Christnings cannot bray
With half such noise and din as they.

And now the plot begins to thicken,
For sparks with inclination stricken,
Make love to every face they meet,
And all with like affection treat.
Each lady is their mistress known,
And every man their rival grown ;
But did they earnest love persue,
Heaven knows what bloodshed might ensue ;
That passion is not in their power,
They'l trifle with't for half an hour,
And very well the ladies know
To what inconstant God they bow,
So treat with railery their discourse,
And laugh at all their feign'd amours ;
'Twas now about the hour eleven,
When the bright sun, who lookt from Heaven,
Had sure forgot his former duty,
And 'gan to scorch the ladies beauty ;
Most to avoid his sawcy scorching,
To room design'd for dancing, march in,
And seat themselves on several benches,

(Like soldiers at a siege in Trenches)
Expecting when the sparks advance,
To take them out for country dance;
Each by himself with wonder stares,
And none to take a lady dares :
Indians were not surprised more,
To see the Spaniards on their shore ;
So these spruce sprigs admire the sight,
But dare not come to closer fight.
The Ladies wondring what the sight meant,
(As women hate a disappointment)
Went from their seats, and by their frowns,
Exprest their hatred of the Clowns.

Six hours thus idly thrown away,
In what was neither work nor play,
(Yet 'tmust be own'd the vanity
Had very much variety)
Musing on what I'de seen and heard,
My honest friend H. N. appeard,
" Come leave," says he, " or I'll condemn ye,
This noisy dressing academy ;
This place of empty boyish prattle,
And go with me and crack a bottle ;"

I lik't the motion, and we met,
With glass of rare in Grace-Church-Street;
Finding our wine was very good
To chear the heart and warm the blood,
We staid till six, and chew'd the cud.

FINIS.

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